

**Claims**

1. A fence plinth formed from sheet material having spaced apart end edge margins and being profiled to incorporate stiffening formations that extend along the sheet between the end edge margins.  
5
2. A fence plinth as claimed in claim 1, wherein the sheet is sheet metal.
3. A fence plinth as claimed in either claims 1 or 2, wherein the sheet is pre-painted galvanized sheet steel.
- 10 4. A fence plinth as claimed in any preceding claim, wherein the stiffening formations are corrugations or ribs such that a cross-sectional profile of the plinth displays a regular wave form with crests and troughs displaced from a notional centre plane of the sheet.
- 15 5. A fence plinth as claimed in any one of claims 1 to 3, wherein the stiffening formations are in the form of one or more ribs and adjacent pans that extend across the sheet.
6. A fence plinth as claimed in any preceding claim,  
20 wherein at least some of the stiffening formations are disposed inboard of opposite side edges of the plinth.
7. A fence plinth as claimed in any preceding claim, wherein the depth of the stiffening formations from a centre plane of the sheet is greater than 20mm.
- 25 8. A fence plinth as claimed in any one of claims 1 to 3, wherein the plinth is profiled to form a structural section such as a z-section to provide the stiffening formations.
9. A fence plinth as claimed in any preceding claim,  
30 wherein the sheet material has opposite side edge margin that interconnect the end edge margins, the side edge margins being configured to allow lapping of one side margin with the other side margin of another said plinth

- 14 -

to form a plinth assembly with the overlapping region forming a region of increased stiffness in the plinth assembly.

10. A fence plinth as claimed in claim 9, wherein the  
5 one side margin nests within the other side margin at the overlapping region.

11. A fence plinth as claimed in any preceding claim,  
wherein the sheet is profiled to allow stacking of the  
plinth with another plinth where the plinths overlap with  
10 one plinth nesting within the other plinth.

12. A fence plinth as claimed in any preceding claim,  
wherein the sheet material is profiled so that the major  
surfaces of the plinth allow free drainage of water across  
those surfaces when the plinth is disposed in its in-use  
15 orientation.

13. A fence plinth as claimed in any preceding claim,  
wherein the ratio of the height of the plinth, measured  
between the opposite side edges of the plinth, to the  
length of the plinth, measured between the end edges of  
20 the plinth, is in the range of 0.03 to 0.10.

14. A fence plinth as claimed in any preceding claim,  
wherein the sheet is bent to form the stiffening  
formations and wherein the radius of the curvature of the  
bends is at least 5mm.

25 15. A fence comprising spaced apart fence posts, each  
including a channel with the channel of one post facing  
the channel of the other post, a barrier panel extending  
between the posts and a plinth according to any preceding  
claim located below the barrier panel and extending  
30 between the posts with the end edge margins of the plinth  
located within respective ones of the fence post channels.

16. A fence as claimed in claim 15, wherein the sheet

- 15 -

from which the plinth is formed is profiled to extend laterally out of a notional centre plane so that the end edge margins of the plinth locate snugly within the fence post channels.

5 17. A fence as claimed in claim 16, wherein the end edge margins are securely located within the channels by the fit between the end edge margins and the channels of the respective posts.

18. A fence as claimed in any one of the claims 15 to 17,  
10 further comprising a plurality of said plinths located one above the other and having their end edge margins located in respective ones of the fence post channels, each of the plinths being arranged in partial overlapping relationship to form a plinth assembly with the or each overlapping  
15 region forming a region of increase stiffness in the plinth assembly that extends between the fence posts.

19. A fence as claimed in claim 18, wherein one side margin of a said plinth nests within the other side margin of an adjacent plinth at the or each overlapping region.

20. A fence comprising two spaced apart posts that include respective channels that face toward one another, a barrier panel extending between the posts, and a plinth located below the barrier panel and extending between the posts, the plinth being formed from sheet material having  
25 opposite side edges, and end edges that interconnect the side edges, the plinth being profiled to extend laterally out of a notional centre plane extending between the side edges so that in use the end edge margins of the plinth locate snugly within the channels.

30 21. A fence as claimed in claim 20, wherein the sheet material is profiled so that the plinth forms a partially closed section having opposite side walls interconnected by a bridging portion.

- 16 -

22. A fence as claimed in either claims 20 or 21, wherein the sheet is sheet metal.
23. A fence as claimed in any one of claims 20 to 22, wherein the sheet is pre-painted galvanized sheet steel.
- 5 24. A fence as claimed in any one of claims 20 to 23, wherein the ratio of the height of the plinth, measured between the opposite side edges of the plinth, to the length of the plinth, measured between the end edges of the plinth, is in the range of 0.03 to 0.10.
- 10 25. A fence as claimed in claims any one of claims 15 to 24, wherein the barrier panel comprises upper and lower rigid rails, and infill means extending from rail to rail.
26. A method of forming fence plinths comprising the steps of:
  - 15 profiling a pre-painted galvanised steel strip to incorporate longitudinal extending stiffening formations in the strip; and
  - shearing the strip at discrete lengths to form the plinths.
- 20 27. A method as claimed in claim 26, wherein the strip is profiled using a roll-forming process.
28. A method as claimed in either claim 26 or 27, wherein the strip is bent to form the stiffening formations and wherein the radius of curvature of the bends are greater
- 25 than 5mm.